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United Nations

Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. The Committee on Relations with the Host Country was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI) of 15 December 1971. The General Assembly, by its resolution 62/72 of 6 December 2007, decided to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country". The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 62/72.

2. The report consists of four chapters. The recommendations and conclusions of the Committee are contained in chapter IV.

Chapter II

Membership, composition, terms of reference and organization of the work of the Committee

3. The Committee is composed of 19 members, as follows:

Bulgaria	Iraq
Canada	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
China	Malaysia
Costa Rica	Mali
Côte d'Ivoire	Russian Federation
Cuba	Senegal
Cyprus	Spain
France	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Honduras	
Hungary	United States of America

4. The Bureau of the Committee consists of the Chairperson, the three Vice-Chairpersons, the Rapporteur and a representative of the host country who attends Bureau meetings ex officio. During the reporting period, the Bureau was composed as follows:

Chairperson:

H.E. Andreas D. Mavroyiannis (Cyprus) — H.E. Minas Hadjimichael (Cyprus)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Branimir S. Zaimov (Bulgaria)
Randy Kondo (Canada)
Guillaume Bailly-Niagri (Côte d'Ivoire)

Rapporteur:

Marcela Calderón (Costa Rica)

5. During most of the reporting period, and through the 238th meeting of the Committee, Andreas D. Mavroyiannis (Permanent Representative of Cyprus) continued to serve as Chairperson. At the 239th meeting, in accordance with the established practice of the Committee and as endorsed by the Bureau, the Committee elected by acclamation Minas Hadjimichael (Permanent Representative of Cyprus) as its new Chairperson. The representatives of Bulgaria, Canada and Côte d'Ivoire served as Vice-Chairpersons, and Marcela Calderón (Costa Rica) as the Rapporteur.

6. The terms of reference of the Committee were determined by the General Assembly in its resolution 2819 (XXVI). In May 1992, the Committee adopted, and in March 1994 slightly modified, a detailed list of topics for its consideration, which is set out in annex I to the present report. The Committee issued two documents during the reporting period (see annex II).

7. During the reporting period, the Committee held the following meetings: the 236th meeting, on 22 January 2008; the 237th meeting, on 22 April 2008; the 238th meeting, on 23 July 2008; the 239th meeting, on 2 October 2008; and the 240th meeting, on 31 October 2008.

Chapter III
Topics dealt with by the Committee

A. Question of security of missions and the safety of their personnel

8. At the 236th meeting, the representative of Cuba expressed concerns about the removal of police protection by the host country for the premises of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations. He informed the Committee that in December 2007, a demonstration involving 22 people had taken place outside the premises. He stated that numerous individuals in the demonstration were dressed in military uniform and some of the demonstrators were flying the flag of the "terrorist organization 'Alpha 66'", an organization responsible for many attacks on the Permanent Mission of Cuba and Cuban nationals. In addition, he informed the Committee of another incident in the same month where an individual smashed a window of the Permanent Mission and had uttered threats against the Mission and its staff. He requested the host country to provide security and protection to the Permanent Mission and its staff in accordance with the relevant international agreements.

9. The representative of the host country took note of the information provided by the representative of Cuba and stated that the matter would be brought to the attention of the appropriate host country authorities. The United States took such complaints very seriously. He noted that while some incidents had occurred, there had been 25 years of good cooperation and a history of appropriate security protection for the mission premises. He informed the Committee that a meeting between all relevant host country authorities (Federal and local) with the representatives of the Permanent Mission of Cuba would take place to discuss resolution of the matter. With regard to the stone-throwing incident, he informed the Committee that the perpetrator had been a disturbed Cuban immigrant who had been arrested by the New York Police Department and charged with a felony.

10. The representative of Cuba, at the 237th meeting, requested information from the host country on its implementation of the new Security Programme for Diplomatic Missions. The representative of the host country explained that new measures had been implemented to upgrade the security provided by the host country to the Permanent Mission of Cuba. In this regard, although the New York City Police Department had attempted to coordinate its activities with the relevant officials of the Permanent Mission on a day-to-day basis, this had not been possible as they were unable to contact their counterpart in the Mission. Thus, he appealed to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to engage with the police officers.

11. The representative of Cuba stated that while the Permanent Mission of Cuba maintained relations with the authorities of the host country, it could not respond on a daily basis to security inquiries by officers of the New York City Police Department owing to other responsibilities held by its security personnel.

B. Entry visas issued by the host country

12. At the 237th meeting, the representative of Cuba expressed concerns over undue delays in the issuance of entry visas by the host country. She informed the Committee that a Cuban official designated to attend the first session of the Group

of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument for import, export and transfer of conventional arms, held in February 2008 at the United Nations, was only granted a visa six days after the end of the meeting even though his visa application had been submitted within the deadline set by the host country. She also informed the Committee that a response had not been received to visa applications made by two officers of the Cuban Association of the United Nations wishing to attend the meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, held in March 2008 at the United Nations. She urged the host country to fulfil its international obligations in conformity with the Headquarters Agreement.

13. The observer of the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Committee of the inability of two members of its delegation to participate in the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, held in February 2008, as they were unable to obtain entry visas from the host country on time. He underlined the negative impact this had on the ability of his country to participate in the meetings held by the United Nations. He hoped that these incidents would not be repeated.

14. The representative of the host country assured the Committee that the host country viewed visa delays very seriously. He informed the Committee that the incident referred to by the representative of Cuba, among others, had been brought to the attention of the Department of State. In addition, a procedure had been established whereby visa applications submitted in Havana would be brought to the attention of the United States Mission in order to facilitate the timely issuance of visas. In relation to the issue raised by the observer of the Syrian Arab Republic, the representative of the host country stated that he had not been aware of the matter. He urged delegations that experienced visa problems to bring it to his attention as soon as possible so that the relevant authorities could be contacted and a timely resolution to the problems could be reached.

15. At the 238th meeting, the observer of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed concern that some members of its delegation to the forty-first session of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law held in June 2008 had been denied visas. Two notes verbales had been addressed to the host country regarding denials and delays in the issuance of visas by the host country. He requested the host country to take the appropriate steps to fulfil its obligations under international law.

16. The representative of the host country expressed regret that some members of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran to a United Nations meeting had not received visas. He informed the Committee that he had requested the Department of State to review the matter. In this regard, he thanked the observer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for having submitted visa applications for its delegation to the high-level segment of the upcoming General Assembly session in a timely manner.

C. Acceleration of immigration and customs procedures

17. At the 238th meeting, the observer of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed concern that there were an increasing number of incidents where members of his Mission had been subject to particular scrutiny at United States airports, which was discriminatory and offensive. He requested the host country to take steps to ensure that all necessary action be taken on the matter. The observer of the Syrian Arab

Republic also expressed grave concerns as his delegation had also been subjected to extra screening procedures.

18. The Chairman recalled that a diplomatic note had been circulated by the United States Mission regarding screening procedures at airports in the United States. The representative of the host country added that there was a procedure for notifying a supervisor of the Transportation Security Administration, which was set out in the diplomatic note that was applicable throughout the United States. He understood that the procedure had been working well, but requested all delegations to inform the United States Mission of any specific incidents (including information on the terminal, date and hour of the incident) so that they could be properly examined and dealt with as appropriate.

19. At the 239th meeting, the representative of Cuba informed the Committee of the treatment received by H.E. Mr. José Machado Ventura, the First Vice-President of the Councils of State and Ministers and the Head of the Cuban delegation to the high-level segment of the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, when transiting through Montréal-Trudeau Airport, Canada, prior to arriving at LaGuardia Airport. He stated that the Vice-President was subjected to rigorous treatment which was not in accordance with the relevant international agreements.

20. The representative of the host country responded that his Mission had received, pursuant to the procedure established to ensure the smooth passage of high-level delegations to the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, the itinerary of the Vice-President's travel from the Cuban Mission. The host country had noted that the Vice-President would be arriving at LaGuardia Airport and as visitors arriving at LaGuardia Airport had to pass through United States immigration and customs at the departing airport, the Department of State had requested the United States Customs and Border Protection at Montréal-Trudeau Airport to extend full courtesies to the Vice-President. He had received confirmation that full courtesies had been extended to the Vice-President. He stated that the host country did not have any information on what had happened after the Vice-President had passed the United States immigration and customs area as the pre-boarding area at the Montréal-Trudeau Airport was outside of the control and jurisdiction of the host country and as such, they had no presence in those areas. He informed the Committee that, accordingly, the host country had no involvement in the incident, which, therefore, fell outside of the scope of the Committee's work.

21. The representative of Cuba stated that it was his understanding that the incident had occurred in the area of the airport under the jurisdiction of the host country. He noted, however, from the information provided by the representative of the host country, that this may not have been the case. He trusted that further investigation of this incident would be made by the appropriate authorities and that the necessary measures would be taken to avoid such incidents in the future. He reserved the right to raise this issue again.

22. The Chairman, having asked whether any other delegation wished to take the floor, said that the Committee had heard the statements made and, referring to the explanations provided, expressed his hope that the relevant authorities mentioned by the representatives of Cuba and the United States would continue to investigate and exchange information with a view to resolving the matter.

D. Transportation: use of motor vehicles, parking and related matters

23. At the 236th meeting, the representative of the People's Republic of China requested clarification on whether there were developments on the issue of payment of parking fees by diplomatic vehicles at New York airports.

24. The representative of the host country stated that parking at the four regional airports that serve New York, namely John F. Kennedy International Airport, LaGuardia Airport, Newark International Airport and Stewart International Airport, were controlled by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. It was his understanding after discussions with the Port Authority that vehicles with diplomatic plates were no longer experiencing problems at the four airports in relation to the payment of parking fees. He thus called on all missions that had encountered problems with parking at airports to bring them to the attention of the host country section of the United States Mission.

25. The representative of the Russian Federation and the observers of Argentina, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Ukraine responded that their Missions also had to pay for parking at the New York airports. The representative of the Russian Federation added that this was a question of international courtesy and requested the representative of the host country to raise this matter with the appropriate authorities.

26. The representative of the host country clarified that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has had in place for a number of years a policy of charging parking fees with diplomatic plates when the car was not carrying an ambassador or consul general. He stated that this was an old policy which had not been enforced until recently. Another meeting with the Port Authority would take place soon and he would report to the Committee on the outcome.

27. At the 237th meeting, the representative of the People's Republic of China raised the issue of parking fees at New York airports. She informed the Committee that from October 2007 to present, payment of parking fees had been requested at least 70 times from its officials at John F. Kennedy International Airport. She sought an update on the matter so that her Mission could ensure that its officials would be exempt from the payment of such parking fees. The representative of the Russian Federation urged the host country to devote more attention and resources to the issue of parking problems of delegations and requested higher level coordination between the various authorities. The observer of Trinidad and Tobago concurred and requested that this situation be rectified as soon as possible.

28. The representative of the host country informed the Committee that an agreement had been reached with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey on the matter so that all vehicles with "A", "C" and "D" series licence plates issued by the United States Department of State would be allowed to park free for the first 24 hours at John F. Kennedy International, Newark Liberty International, LaGuardia and Stewart International Airports. While the written policies of the Port Authority had not yet been amended, he stated that it was his understanding that the new policy would be implemented during the week of 21 April 2008. The host country was seeking a written statement from the Port Authority, which would then serve as a basis for a diplomatic note to the missions.

29. At the 237th meeting, the observer of Poland expressed concerns over the new policy on the issuance of driver's licences to chauffeurs employed by missions. He informed the Committee that chauffeurs were required to obtain a driver's licence from the host country for which they had to pass an exam even though many had worked numerous years as professional drivers. Furthermore, they were required to provide a social security number, which in many cases foreigners were unable to obtain. He appealed to the host country to facilitate the obtaining of driver's licences. The representative of the Russian Federation added that members of his Mission had experienced similar difficulties.

30. The representative of the host country responded that this was not the first time this issue had been brought to his attention. He explained that applications for a driver's licence in the State of New York required certain points for identification of which a social security number counted as one. He stated that the Office of Foreign Missions of the Department of State would look into the matter and would be available to discuss specific issues with missions.

31. At the 238th meeting, the representative of the People's Republic of China expressed concern regarding the new procedure for the issuance of driver's licences for non-diplomatic drivers, including the ambassador's drivers. The new procedure could lead to delays, which may affect those drivers from properly performing their functions. In addition, as some of the Mission's drivers were not fully proficient in English, they may find it difficult to pass a written exam in English.

32. The representative of the host country stated that his Mission had not been informed of these problems. He suggested that a diplomatic note or letter be sent to his Mission addressing the problems experienced with the new procedures so that they could be brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

E. Other matters

33. At the 236th meeting, the observer of Italy sought an update on the changes in the procedure to claim exemptions to taxation of gasoline and other petroleum products. The representative of the host country responded that the host country recognized its obligations and responsibilities to provide privileges and immunities to permanent missions and their representatives, as well as to the United Nations and its officials, in accordance with international law. In this regard, he noted that the recent change was not a change in policy but that of procedure and that it had affected all types of organizations that could claim exemptions, including the Federal Government and non-profit organizations. He stated that the Department of State was working through its Office of Foreign Missions to ensure that diplomatic personnel were able to obtain their tax exemptions. However, owing to the decentralized form of government in the United States, it was a complicated matter for the Federal Government to ensure on a timely basis that all its States accorded tax exemption for gasoline to diplomats, especially as the present situation was the inadvertent result of a court judgement. He explained that, therefore, it may take some time before the situation could return to status quo ante but he reassured the Committee that the host country was working with all relevant partners for a new State legislation on the issue. He promised to inform all permanent missions as well as the Committee when there was a return to status quo ante. In the meantime, he requested all representatives of permanent missions to retain their receipts for the purchase of gasoline.

34. The representative of the Russian Federation thanked the representative of the host country and clarified that diplomatic missions did not fall within the category of "charitable organization" which the court in question had ruled on. However, he understood that this was a complex matter on which the host country was taking action.

35. The Chairman in summing up clarified that the host country was not questioning the right of missions to purchase gasoline tax free. However, the problem was in the methodology in granting the reimbursement of taxes paid. He further stated his understanding that there were efforts under way to adopt New York State legislation to bring the situation back to status quo ante. Until then, all missions were requested to keep their receipts for later reimbursements.

36. The observer of Italy thanked the representative of the host country for his explanations and clarifications on this matter. He was confident that the Office of Foreign Missions would provide the necessary assistance to the permanent missions and requested the host country to follow up the matter.

37. The representative of the People's Republic of China also welcomed the host country's affirmation that the principle of exemption from taxation for gasoline had not changed. She hoped that the host country would take all necessary measures to resolve the issue as a soon as possible.

38. At the 237th meeting, the representative of the People's Republic of China sought information on developments with regard to reimbursement of taxes paid on gasoline purchases. The representative of the host country regretted that it was taking some time to reinstate the previous practice for obtaining tax exemption. He informed the Committee that the issue was on the calendar of the New York State Senate and that the matter was expected to be decided by June 2008. He recalled that a diplomatic note had been sent to all missions about the procedure for reimbursement of taxes paid on gasoline purchases.

39. At the 237th meeting, the observer of India referred to the issue of property taxes levied by the City of New York on premises used by permanent missions to host diplomats. He informed the Committee that on 8 February 2008, the United States District Court had held that the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations supported the City's position that the residential exemption from taxes was limited to the residence of the Head of Mission and not of others. While his Government had appealed this ruling, the observer of India urged the host country to do its utmost to resolve this matter in accordance with the accepted principles of international law so as to bring this matter of property taxes in line with the Headquarters Agreement. The observer of India reserved the option to call for a meeting of the Committee on a priority basis if necessary to discuss the matter.

40. The observer of Mongolia concurred with the statement of the observer of India and recalled that in the spring of 2003, the City of New York had filed lawsuits against four Member States, including hers, seeking a Judgment of Foreclosure establishing the validity of tax liens held by the City resulting from real property taxes and other charges allegedly due or owing to the city levied on premises used to house staff members. The United States District Court had assumed jurisdiction under the "immovable property" exception of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, a decision which had been upheld by the Supreme Court

of the United States. She stressed that this decision on jurisdiction had serious implications for all diplomatic and consular posts. She informed the Committee that the ruling of the District Court on the merits in favour of the City was pending on appeal since her Government continued to hold the view that the entirety of her Mission was exempt from real property taxation under both New York and international law. The provision of housing to staff on mission premises facilitated the performance of diplomatic functions, especially when staff members in smaller missions were assigned multiple tasks that could only be performed after hours. The observer of Mongolia stated that the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations provided tax exemption for the premises of the mission, which included buildings or parts of buildings used for the purposes of the mission. Taxation of mission premises went against the concept of reciprocity since Mongolia did not levy taxes on mission premises located in its territory in accordance with long-established international custom and relevant international law. She noted that under the Headquarters Agreement, the United States grants to United Nations Member States and their staff "the same privileges and immunities ... as it accords to diplomatic envoys accredited to it". She called on the host country to uphold the relevant norms of international law and to afford its fullest cooperation and assistance in resolving the disputes with the City of New York.

41. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya thanked the host country for the assistance provided to diplomatic representatives and supported the statements made by the observers of India and Mongolia. He stressed that the premises of diplomatic missions should not be used for commercial purposes, only for official functions, and accordingly, should not be taxed. In addition to the above, he referred to difficulties his own Mission was facing in maintaining its premises as a result of restrictions placed on its bank accounts. His country was fully prepared to cooperate with the host country and the host city in order to resolve these problems in accordance with the Headquarters Agreement and the norms of international law.

42. The New York City Commissioner for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, Marjorie Tiven, stated that New York City was proud to host the United Nations Headquarters and the missions of its 192 Member States. She assured the Committee of the City's unchanged policy of respecting international law. She reassured the Committee that the recent court decisions had not changed the tax-exempt status attached to property used for mission offices or the residences of Permanent Representatives. Nor were any changes contemplated where bilateral agreements existed between the United States and specific States. However, she explained that after the decision reached by the Court, the City had reached out to the remaining countries that had resisted the payment of the property tax claims. She noted that the interest rate on tax debt ran at 18 per cent per annum and hoped that the small number of countries involved would step forward to resolve their property tax debt.

43. The representative of the host country stated that the host country attached great importance to finding a solution to the problem but acknowledged that it was a very complicated matter which could take time to solve. He was aware that bilateral discussions were taking place in Washington, D.C., and that the issues raised in the Committee would not be a surprise to the Department of State. He had taken extensive notes of the interventions made, including by the New York City Commissioner, which he would report to the Department of State.

44. At the 237th meeting, the observer of Ecuador expressed concerns regarding the freezing or blocking of bank accounts held by its diplomats and protested against the arbitrary procedures that had been applied by the bank. The representative of the host country responded that the Department of State had intervened and that the accounts were in the process of being unblocked and that any money that had been deducted would be reimbursed.

45. At the 237th meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation requested the host country for further information regarding the proposed congestion pricing for vehicles entering into Manhattan. The representative of the host country responded that this initiative had failed in the New York State legislature and was no longer under consideration.

46. At the 238th meeting, the representative of the People's Republic of China raised once again the issue of reimbursement of taxes paid on gasoline purchases. Her Mission was particularly concerned as some Mission diplomats were being reassigned to other duty stations before being able to claim their reimbursement. The representative of the host country responded that the legislative amendment by which exemption to taxation for gasoline would take place at the pump instead of the current reimbursement procedure would only take effect on 2 December 2008 owing to unforeseen events. However, all diplomats, even after their departure from the United States, would be able to claim reimbursement for all taxes paid. The Office of Foreign Missions of the Department of State was available to assist in this process.

47. At the 238th meeting, the observer of India referred to the issue of property taxes levied against mission premises by the City of New York that he had raised at the previous meeting. He informed the Committee that a significant number of missions had received a notice from the City requesting the payment of property tax and inquired whether any progress had been made by the host country on the matter.

48. The representative of the host country responded that the United States Department of State was aware that the City authorities had contacted a number of missions for the payment of taxes. He assured the observers of India and Mongolia that the Department of State was giving this matter the highest level of attention and was continuing its efforts to find a solution to this very complex matter.

49. At the 238th meeting, the representative of Cuba expressed concerns that on 9 June 2008, the United States Department of State had held the import of 32 bottles of rum intended for official use by the Permanent Mission of Cuba. She noted that this was the first time such difficulties had occurred in relation to the import of goods for its official use and urged the host country to comply with its obligations under international law.

50. The representative of the host country responded that there had been a specific problem regarding this particular shipment and recalled that there were many ways to bring goods in for protocol purposes to which the Permanent Mission of Cuba should avail itself. He suggested a meeting to discuss the matter and stated his understanding that the Mission had been given the option to re-export the liquor back to Cuba but the Mission had not taken up that option. The representative of Cuba responded that the offer to re-export the items did not address the issue as they wished to use the goods in question for receptions held at the Permanent Mission in New York.

Chapter IV
Recommendations and conclusions

51. **At its 240th meeting, on 31 October 2008, the Committee approved the following recommendations and conclusions:**

(a) **The Committee reaffirms the Headquarters Agreement and the provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations;**

(b) **Considering that the maintenance of appropriate conditions for the delegations and missions accredited to the United Nations is in the interest of the United Nations and all Member States, the Committee appreciates the efforts made by the host country to that end and anticipates that all issues raised at its meetings, including those referred to below, will be duly settled in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law;**

(c) **The Committee notes that the observance of privileges and immunities is an issue of great importance. The Committee emphasizes the need to solve, through negotiations, problems that might arise in this regard for the normal functioning of the delegations and the missions accredited to the United Nations. The Committee urges the host country to continue to take appropriate action, such as training of police, security, customs and border control officers, with a view to maintaining respect for diplomatic privileges and immunities. If violations occur, the Committee urges the host country to ensure that such cases are properly investigated and remedied, in accordance with applicable law;**

(d) **Considering that the security of the missions accredited to the United Nations and the safety of their personnel are indispensable for their effective functioning, the Committee appreciates the efforts made by the host country to this end and anticipates that the host country will continue to take all measures necessary to prevent any interference with the functioning of the missions;**

(e) **The Committee notes the problems experienced by some permanent missions in connection with the implementation of the Parking Programme and shall remain seized of the matter, with a view to continuously ensuring the proper implementation of the Programme in a manner that is fair, non-discriminatory, effective and therefore consistent with international law;**

(f) **The Committee requests the host country to continue to bring to the attention of New York City officials reports about other problems experienced by permanent missions or their staff in order to improve the conditions for their functioning and to promote compliance with international norms concerning diplomatic privileges and immunities and to continue to consult with the Committee on these important issues;**

(g) **The Committee recalls that, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI), the Committee shall consider and advise the host country on issues arising in connection with the implementation of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations;**

(h) **The Committee anticipates that the host country will enhance its efforts to ensure the issuance, in a timely manner, of entry visas to**

representatives of Member States pursuant to article IV, section 11, of the Headquarters Agreement to travel to New York on official United Nations business, including to attend official United Nations meetings, and notes that a number of delegations have requested shortening the time frame applied by the host country for issuance of entry visas to representatives of Member States, since this time frame poses difficulties for the full-fledged participation of Member States in United Nations meetings; the Committee also anticipates that the host country will enhance efforts to facilitate participation, including visa issuance, of representatives of Member States in other United Nations meetings, as appropriate;

(i) Concerning travel regulations issued by the host country with regard to personnel of certain missions and staff members of the Secretariat of certain nationalities, the Committee urges the host country to remove the remaining travel restrictions and, in that regard, notes the positions of the affected Member States as reflected in the report, of the Secretary-General and of the host country;

(j) The Committee stresses the importance of permanent missions, their personnel and Secretariat personnel meeting their financial obligations;

(k) The Committee welcomes the participation of Members of the United Nations that are not members of the Committee in its work. The Committee also welcomes the contribution of the Secretariat in its work and emphasizes its importance. The Committee is convinced that its important work has been strengthened by the cooperation of all concerned;

(l) The Committee wishes to reiterate its appreciation to the representative of the United States Mission in charge of host country affairs, to the Host Country Affairs Section of the United States Mission to the United Nations and the Office of Foreign Missions, as well as to those local entities, in particular the New York City Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, that participate in its meetings and contribute to its efforts to help accommodate the needs, interests and requirements of the diplomatic community and to promote mutual understanding between the diplomatic community and the people of the City of New York.

Annex I

List of topics for consideration by the Committee

1. Question of the security of missions and the safety of their personnel.
2. Consideration of and recommendations on issues arising in connection with the implementation of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, including:
   (a) Entry visas issued by the host country;
   (b) Acceleration of immigration and customs procedures;
   (c) Exemption from taxes.
3. Responsibilities of permanent missions to the United Nations and their personnel, in particular the problem of claims of financial indebtedness and procedures to be followed with a view to resolving the issues relating thereto.
4. Housing for diplomatic personnel and for Secretariat staff.
5. Question of privileges and immunities:
   (a) Comparative study of privileges and immunities;
   (b) Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and other relevant instruments.
6. Host country activities: activities to assist members of the United Nations community.
7. Transportation: use of motor vehicles, parking and related matters.
8. Insurance, education and health.
9. Public relations of the United Nations community in the host city and the question of encouraging the mass media to publicize the functions and status of permanent missions to the United Nations.
10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

Annex II

List of documents

A/AC.154/385	Letter dated 25 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country
A/AC.154/386	Letter dated 1 May 2008 from the Minister Counsellor for Host Country Affairs of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

08-58295 (E) 051108